Arriving at Ohio State

When should I arrive in Columbus?

F-1 and J-1 students entering the United States on an initial SEVIS record may arrive in the United States no more than 30 days prior to the start date on their I-20/DS-2019 (the same as the start date of classes for the term). OIA strongly recommends that you arrive more than two weeks prior to the start of classes in order to accomplish pre-semester tasks. F1 students who have been issued a transfer I-20 form do not need to adhere to the 30-day-entry requirement and may enter the United States earlier if using the transfer I-20 issued by Ohio State.

Which office can help with finding housing off campus?

The office of Off-Campus and Commuter Student Services provides a wide range of support and resources for students searching for and living in off-campus housing. Consult their website to do an online housing search, find a roommate, get safety tips, see rankings of local landlords and more.

When can I move into my dorm?

Please contact University Housing with all your questions at housing@osu.edu.

How can OIA help me?

When international students and international scholars first arrive at Ohio State, the Office of International Affairs is one of their initial points of contact. We provide them with a warm welcome to the campus community and support their transition to help them comfortably adjust to their new life on campus and in Columbus. Students meet one-on-one with a representative from International Students and Scholars to get answers to questions about immigration regulations, cultural differences and financial matters.

Are you open on weekends (Saturday and Sunday)?
No. OIA, like most university offices, is open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday.

What type of health insurance do I have to purchase?

All Ohio State students must have health insurance, and almost all international students are required to purchase Ohio State’s Comprehensive Health Benefits Plan. Full information about the plan can be found on Student Health Insurance’s website: shi.osu.edu. Information just for international students can be found here: shi.osu.edu/for-international-students. Any questions can be sent to shi_info@osu.edu. You can only waive Ohio State’s student health insurance plan if:

- You are fully financially sponsored by your government, and it has designated a health plan for you.
- You are able to hold insurance through a U.S.-based employer (for example, if you are a dependent on the plan of a spouse who holds coverage through a U.S.-based employer).

When will I register for classes?

Undergraduate students will meet with their academic advisor during orientation in order to schedule courses and learn more about college-specific requirements. Graduate students should contact their academic department to find out if classes can be scheduled prior to arrival. Note that you cannot finish your course registration until you have completed immigration check-in and your English and math placement tests are completed and scored.

How will I register for classes?

First semester students cannot register for courses on their own; you will need the assistance of your academic advisor to put courses on your schedule. Undergraduate students will meet with their academic advisor during orientation in order to schedule courses and learn more about college-specific requirements. Undergraduate students who attend Pre-Departure Orientation in China can begin the course registration process prior to arrival (but are still required to attend immigration check-in and orientation on campus). Graduate students should meet with their academic department upon arrival to discuss course registration.